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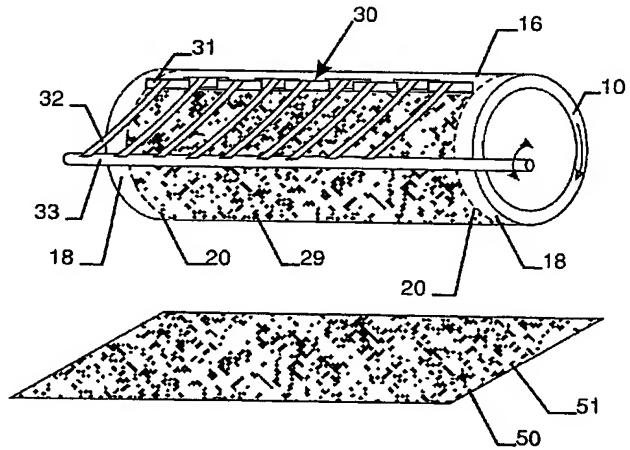
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(54) Title: CONTACTING OF AN ELECTRODE WITH A SUBSTANCE IN VACUUM



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(57) Abstract: A method for improving the sputter deposition process is provided. The method comprises the following steps: a) providing a vacuum; b) providing an electrode (10, 34, 34', 44, 44') in the provided vacuum; c) providing a substrate in said vacuum, said substrate having no contact with said electrodes (10, 34, 34', 44, 44'); d) providing a device (22, 22', 24, 24', 26, 26', 28, 28', 30, 36, 36', 48, 48') in the vacuum. The device is in relative motion to the electrode and is in contact with the electrode over a contact zone. The device removes solid material from the electrode or applies solid material to the electrode. The method is carried out by means of a simple mechanism. There is no need for complicated electronics or sophisticated control algorithms. The method is carried out in vacuum, i.e. there is no need to break the vacuum, so that the machine downtime is reduced.



*For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.*